

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

After a full debate, the Senate today cast a strong, bipartisan vote in support of legislation that will ensure that our intelligence professionals continue to have the critical tools they need to protect the Nation.

This good bill passed by the Senate provides a long-term foundation for our Intelligence Community to monitor the communications of foreign terrorists in ways that are timely and effective and that also protect the liberties of Americans. It will keep closed dangerous intelligence gaps that threatened our security. And this bill improves on the Protect America Act passed last summer by providing fair and just liability protection to those private companies who have been sued for billions of dollars only because they are believed to have done the right thing and assisted the Nation after the September 11th terrorist attacks.

I commend senators from both sides of the aisle who came together to pass this important bill. I thank Leaders Reid and McConnell and the leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Senators Rockefeller and Bond, for finishing work on this bill. Today the Senate demonstrated that protecting our Nation is not a partisan issue.

The House of Representatives now has an opportunity to put aside narrow partisan concerns and come together to pass this bipartisan bill and send it to my desk without delay. Our intelligence professionals and private sector partners need the certainty of long-term legislation that will allow us to keep programs in place to protect the Nation, so that the flow of critical intelligence information is not interrupted.

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